



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

January 25, 2006

News Release

ICE ARRESTS 11 ILLEGAL ALIENS AT TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE

-Arrests part of ICE's critical infrastructure protection mission-

PANAMA CITY – Eleven men were arrested here today by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) special agents following the discovery of their illegal presence in the country by military personnel working at the base's main gate.

The men, all citizens of Mexico, were employed by a sub-contractor to do concrete work at the military base.

Military personnel immediately contacted ICE to verify the status of those seeking entry into the facility. ICE special agents from the Office of the Resident Agent-in-Charge in Pensacola responded to the scene and confirmed that the men were illegally present in the country.

Nine of the 11 men were placed into administrative removal proceedings for immigration violations. They will appear before an immigration judge at a later date. The remaining two men were immediately taken into ICE custody, as they are mandatory detention cases. One illegally re-entered the country after being deported, while the other is a convicted aggravated felon.

“We are committed to working with our law enforcement partners in shutting down national security and public safety vulnerabilities,” said Robert W. Weber, special agent-in-charge in Tampa. “Due to the vigilance of military personnel at Tyndall and their coordination with ICE, we were able to take immediate action by intercepting these 11 individuals prior to breaching security at the military installation.”

In accordance with ICE's homeland security mission, ICE prioritizes worksite enforcement efforts by focusing on investigations related to critical infrastructure, national security and employers who engage in egregious criminal violations. Unauthorized workers employed in sensitive security sites and critical infrastructure facilities -- such as military installations, airports, nuclear power and chemical plants and defense contractors -- are vulnerable to exploitation by terrorists, smugglers, traffickers or other criminals.

#ICE#

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibility for a number of key homeland security priorities.